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and rethinking secularism. This was controversial at the time, although it is no longer denied today. Yet multiculturalism continues to be caricatured. Then, it was trivialised as “steelbands, saris, and samosas”. Now, it is rejected as a threat to social unity and subversive of western civilisation.



Despite the announcement of its death, multiculturalism is very much a reality. Not only do racial and ethnic groups exist in our society but minorities are constantly told they are “different”, while also having their own sense of identity.

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## ➤ World Teachers’ Day

5th October 2010  
Wāqaus Ali

If you can read this line, you really ought to give thanks to a teacher.

Ask yourself this question – who is the most influential person in your life?

“My parents” may be an obvious reply since they were the first to nurse you with the basics of life or perhaps your life-long best buddy who made your life all that more colourful. Surely, there will be a unique answer for each of us but I’m certain to say, a common answer for most of us would be “my teachers” – those who taught you the ropes of life.



Undoubtedly for me, teachers are the most influential people in my life – by that, I mean all those wonderful people who nurtured me – starting with from my parents from day one to the present day grey-haired spiritual director, better known as my ‘Shaykh’. Actually, while I consider all those who taught me a lesson or two, I am compelled to include in that category, the tactful burglar, who amazingly pinched my BMX bike (along with the drain pipe it

was chained to!) from my back yard in broad day light! Although there was nothing wonderful about the burglary, it definitely taught me an unforgettable lesson for life; lock the back gate!

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